

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable, comprising: optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers generally stranded about a center area of the cable; said buffer tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center layer, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values being substantially the same.
2. (currently amended) The fiber optic cable of claim 1, differing buffer tube diameters with the same wall thickness and lay lengths being used in each layer to provide the minimum helix factor value for each layer, the helix factor value being within about 0% to about 5% of each other.
3. (original) The fiber optic cable of claim 1, said buffer tubes having inner or outer diameters that vary from tube layer to tube layer.
4. (currently amended) The fiber optic cable of claim 1, one of said buffer tube layers having a relatively smaller buffer tube wall thicknesses or [outer diameters occupying] the inner tube layer having buffer tubes with a relatively smaller outer diameter.
5. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable system, comprising: first and second fiber optic cables, each of said first and second fiber optic cables having respective optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers respectively in said cables generally stranded about a center area of the respective fiber optic cables; said buffer

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tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center area, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values within each said cable being substantially the same; and the layer of buffer tubes of said first optical fiber cable being optically connected to a corresponding layer of buffer tubes of said second fiber optic cable.

6. (cancelled)

7. (original) The fiber optic cable system of claim 5, at least some of said optically interconnected optical fibers having essentially the same overall fiber length through said cables.

8. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable system, comprising: one or more concatenated cables with at least one cable section having multiple layers of buffer tubes, at least some of the concatenated fibers in a first layer of the system having essentially the same overall fiber length as some of the concatenated fibers in a second layer of the system.

9. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable, comprising: optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers generally stranded about a center area of the cable; said buffer tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center area, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values being substantially non-equal.

10. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable system, comprising: first and second fiber optic cables, each of said first and second fiber optic cables having respective optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers respectively in said cables generally stranded about center areas of the respective fiber optic cables; said buffer tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center area, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values within said first fiber optic cable being substantially non-equal; and the respective helix factor values in said second fiber optic cable having the respective helix factor values such that at least some of the optical fibers in the overall fiber optic cable system have concatenated fiber lengths being essentially equal, when layers of buffer tubes of said first optical fiber cable are optically interconnected to a corresponding layer of buffer tubes of said second fiber optic cable.

11. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable system with some or all fibers having essentially the same length, comprising: first and second fiber optic cables, each of said first and second fiber optic cables having respective optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers respectively in said cables generally stranded about a center area of the respective fiber optic cables; said buffer tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center area, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values within each said cable being substantially non-equal; and the layer of buffer

tubes of said first optical fiber cable being optically connected to a non-corresponding layer of buffer tubes of said second fiber optic cable.

12. (currently amended) A fiber optic cable system, comprising: first and second fiber optic cables, each of said first and second fiber optic cables having respective optical fibers disposed in buffer tubes, said buffer tubes defining at least two layers respectively in said cables generally stranded about a center area of the respective fiber optic cables; said buffer tube layers defining a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes being closer to said center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from said center area, said inner and outer buffer tube layers each comprising a respective helix factor value, said respective helix factor values within each said cable being substantially the same; and the inner layer of buffer tubes of said first optical fiber cable being optically connected to a outer layer of buffer tubes of said second fiber optic cable.

13. (previously added) The fiber optic cable system of claim 12, at least some of said optically interconnected optical fibers having essentially the same overall fiber length through said cables.

14. (previously added) The fiber optic cable of claim 9, said buffer tube having inner or outer diameters that vary from tube layer to tube layer.

15. (currently amended) The fiber optic cable of claim 9, one of said buffer tube layers having a relatively smaller buffer tube wall thicknesses or [outer diameters occupying] the inner tube layer having buffer tubes with a relatively smaller outer

diameter.

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